

APPEAL

It was his age, she thought --
a vulnerable time when the glance

of a 17-year old on the loose
spelt trouble for the household.

Maureen knew this one was big:
the man was trying too hard -- like

pulling in his stomach when friends
arrived. What could have caused him,

a foolish, thoughtless man
to donate a pound to a stranger's

brain operation? Philpot
didn't want to seem stubborn, alien:

if he had transgressed against some ethnic
Law, or just gone soft in the head,

he would impose his own sanctions.
He determined to check up on his

investment, to find out what form
of life he was helping to prolong.

And if the family in question turned out
to be fascist -- would he have to demand

his money back? And would his pound
still be clean? There should be a Law,

after all, against 17-year olds, on the loose.